



# Annual report of the James H. Shea Award Committee for FY25

Submitted by Laura Guertin, Committee Chair

**Committee members:** *Laura Guertin (chair, term ends '28 – note Laura was asked to serve as chair this year because of a gap in committee membership and she is currently serving a second term); Avery Shinneman (term ends '26); Maxwell Dahlquist (term ends '27); David Schultz (term ends '29); Alison Jolley (JGE Editor)*

## Executive summary

The Shea Award Committee made great progress in developing a rubric to use for the award, especially as nominations are coming in for modes of writing beyond traditional print materials and now include multimedia objects. One important and unexpected part of our process was seeing how many nominations were submitted from non-NAGT members, which confirms to us how important it is to verify the active membership status of all nominators. The committee also drafted additional text to place on the NAGT Shea Award page to assist nominators in submitting information to help the review committee see the scholarly development, assessment, and/or impact of the material, such as beyond social media metrics.

## Detailed report

### Promotional activities

An announcement about the award was promoted through the AGU Community discussion boards for the Education Division and ESWN; the GSA discussion forum for Geoscience Education; and on the Geo2YC listserv maintained by SERC. L. Guertin posted announcements on her personal account on the social media platform BlueSky.

### Nominations and selection process

On February 12, 2025, the committee chair emailed all committee members to confirm they could access the committee's Google Drive folder, and to ask them to review the draft of a rubric for the group to use. As we knew there would be nominations to consider that ranged from print/text material to multimedia videos, the committee adjusted the language to reflect this increasing range of mediums.

On March 23, the committee chair asked NAGT to see if the nominators who submitted letters were active NAGT members, as listed as a requirement on the award page. This removed



twelve of the letters from committee review. Once the nomination deadline of April 15 passed, the eligible letters/materials were downloaded and placed in the Google Drive for committee members to review. There were three candidates eligible for review.

On April 23, the rubric was finalized with committee comments. This date was also the deadline for committee members to complete a When2Meet poll to schedule a Zoom meeting for discussion. As committee members were in time zones across the globe, it was unfortunate that there was no time that everyone could meet. The committee chair sent a survey to all committee members on April 25 that was set up with the candidates and based upon the newly-created rubric.

On May 10, the committee completed its reviews in the survey form, and the top score was named the awardee. This decision was confirmed by all committee members through a reply-all email chain. The name was then forwarded on to the NAGT Ethics Committee and Executive Office.

### Awardee(s)

For the 2025 Excellence in Earth Science Writing and Editing: James H. Shea Award, the Committee selected Dr. Rachel Phillips of the University of South Carolina. She was nominated by Dr. Katherine Ryker. Both were notified of the selection via email by the committee chair on May 28 (a copy of the text is available in the Committee's Google Drive folder). All that submitted nominations for other candidates were emailed to let them know that their candidate was not selected, and if their nomination letter would remain on file and for how many years. Nominators that did not meet the award requirements (an active member of NAGT) were informed that their letters were not able to be considered by the committee due to their lack of membership, but that we did appreciate their enthusiasm for the candidate.

### Reflection and looking forward

The committee made great progress this year, establishing a rubric and developing additional text that needs to be added to the award website to address the print and multimedia portfolios being submitted for consideration (which the committee has drafted and submitted to the NAGT Executive Officer). The committee needs one additional new member to start a four-year term in 2025-2026.